

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

*United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt*

For Further Information, Contact: Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward C. Weiner (619) 557-7125

For Immediate Release

CUSTOMS/BORDER PROTECTION OFFICER AT OTAY MESA PLEADS GUILTY AFTER RESIGNING FROM GOVERNMENT SERVICE

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - February 19, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Jason Alan O'Neal, who resigned as a Bureau of Customs and Border Protection Officer on January 8, 2008, pled guilty today in federal court in San Diego before United States Magistrate Judge William McCurine, Jr. to a felony charge of making false statements, subject to final acceptance of the plea by United States District Court Judge Irma E. Gonzalez, at the time of sentencing. As part of his plea agreement, O'Neal will not seek Federal employment in the future or ever apply for a state or local law enforcement position.

In connection with his guilty plea, O'Neal admitted that he lied to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Special Agents when he stated that he used the Treasury Enforcement Communications System (TECS) solely in his official capacity as an officer with the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection. In fact, he

accessed the TECS database in an unofficial capacity to monitor crossings of his girlfriend over 100 times. The plea agreement stated in part: “Defendant’s girlfriend lived in Mexico and was a participant in the Secure Electronic Network for Travelers’ Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) program and crossed frequently from Mexico into the United States driving a 2006 Land Rover which was purchased for her by defendant.”

United States Attorney Hewitt stated “This guilty plea, as well as O’Neal’s resignation from Government service, represents an appropriate conclusion to a case involving a breach of public trust.” United States Attorney Hewitt praised the efforts of the Border Corruption Task Force, including the FBI, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security (OIG), the Office of Professional Responsibility of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection and the Internal Revenue Service, which participated in the investigation.

According to FBI Special Agent in Charge Keith Slotter, “The guilty plea to the felony charge of making false statements to FBI agents arising out of a probe of O’Neal’s activities at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry and his resignation from his position in the federal Government confirm that improper manipulation of computer data at our Ports of Entry will be exposed and prosecuted.”

O’Neal is scheduled to appear before Judge Irma E. Gonzalez for sentencing on May 12, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 08cr0400-IEG

Jason Alan O’Neal

SUMMARY OF CHARGE

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001(a)(2) – False Statements
Maximum penalty: Five years in prison, \$250,000 fine

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

Border Corruption Task Force

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Office of Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security

Office of Professional Responsibility, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection

Internal Revenue Service